



Quarterly

LOS ANGELES
COUNTY MUSEUM

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DIVISION
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LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM

EXPOSITION PARK

LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA

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The Historical Miniature Group— An Interpretive Technique

By DWIGHT FRANKLIN *

The miniature group is a three-dimensional picture, a small tableau, with actors, scenery and background, momentarily frozen into a scene which tells a story, historical, ethnological or modern. The group may be large or small, may show one figure or a multitude. The figures and sets vary in material, scale and style according to the method and taste of the artist who makes the group.

These little scenes, now so widely used in museums, had their simple beginnings some forty years ago. Life-sized habitat groups were widely used at that time and small-scale figure arrangements were to be seen in table cases. It would have been a logical move to combine elements of these two

exhibits, for scenes such as those in the habitat groups could have been displayed more economically in smaller space by the use of reduced figures. However, this possibility was overlooked for some time. Eventually it was done, but the development was slow.

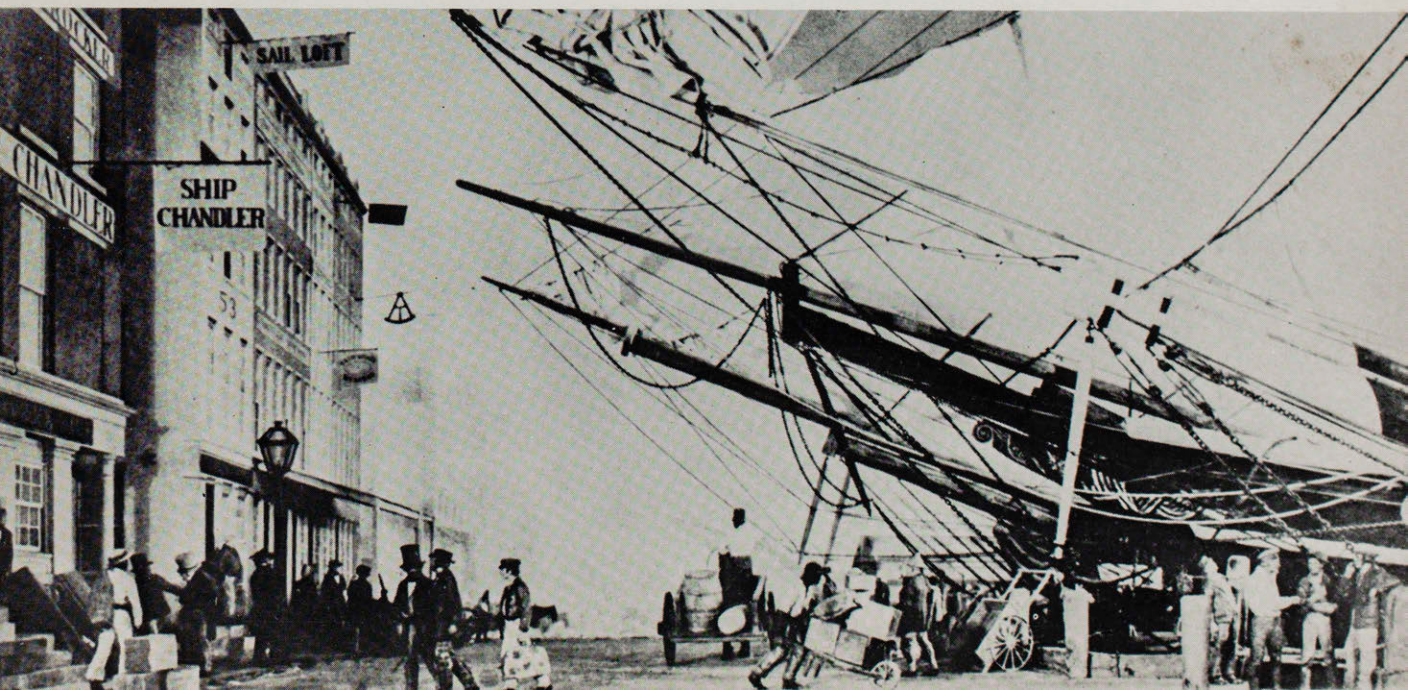
When I made my first independent miniature exhibit, I had worked for several years in the Museum of Natural History as an artist preparator and was familiar with the general principles of habitat groups. I knew, for example, that they had scenic backgrounds, were lighted by concealed lights from within the group and were viewed from the front. In spite of this knowledge, my first small figures were arranged conventionally in

* In the world of today where the visual is taking precedence, the historical models of the author of this article, make it possible for the viewer to learn through the sense of sight rather than by study. Mr. Franklin, who has been creating these models since 1914, steadily developed the fine technique he has achieved today. His work is to be found in museums throughout the United States and in Paris, as well as in private homes and clubs. He has just completed a series of single historical portrait figures for the Los Angeles County Museum.

**Photos courtesy of the author.

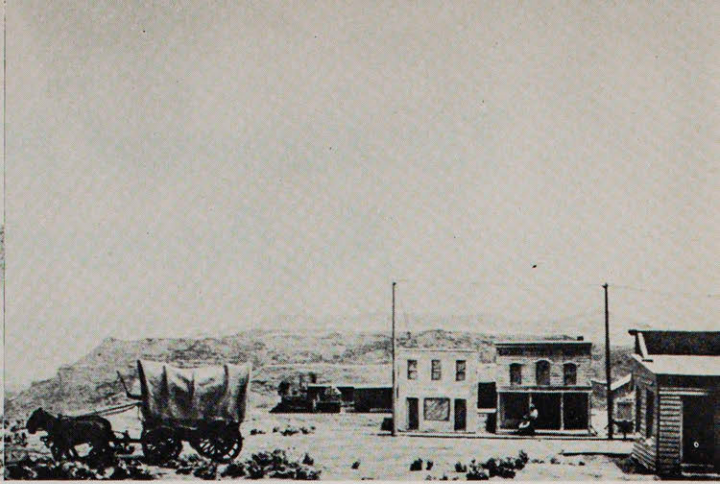
SOUTH STREET, NEW YORK, 1850

(In Museum of the City of New York)





WELCOMING THE TRAVELER
(One of the first groups made by Mr. Franklin in 1915 for the Children's Museum in Brooklyn)



END OF THE RAILROAD, 1860's
(World History Room of the Brooklyn Children's Museum, 1920's)

a low table case, as ordered by the then young Newark Museum. My second group, for the same museum, was a wall model (a step in the right direction) with a sketchy sky background. It was lighted by the gallery lights, but it was seen from the front, as life-sized groups were seen, rather than from all sides and above, as table models were viewed. My next assignment, from the

Children's Museum of Brooklyn, for a series of geographic scenes showing man and his environment, gave me an opportunity to experiment with my ideas for groups. I discovered among other things, that eye-level viewing (low, in the Children's Museum) was best, that lighting was important and could, if so desired and properly used, lend drama to almost any scene, and that

ESKIMO BEAR HUNT

(Cleveland Museum of Art, about 1922)





THE VIKINGS
(Museum of European Cultures, University of
Illinois, 1917)



JOHN PAUL JONES GROUP (detail)
(Naval Museum at Annapolis, 1942)

PURCHASE OF MANHATTAN ISLAND

(Museum of the City of New York, 1940)



perspective could be forced by the use of a diminished scale for background figures and scenery.

I was greatly interested in the theater at this time. New methods of presentation were being evolved and realism of stage production, as exemplified by Belasco, was giving way to impressionistic settings, dramatic lighting and an experimental use of color. The different effects achieved by the change of lights in either color or placement was particularly fascinating and I might have become permanently beguiled by the stagecraft of my groups except for the fact that the figures themselves were my paramount interest.

From an ideological point of view, figures in appropriate settings could be made to represent all of history and for many years I did my best to cover as much historical ground as possible. I jumped from views of pre-historic man to those in the trenches of World War I, from Vikings to John Paul Jones, from the purchase of Manhattan Island to steel workers on the Empire State Building.

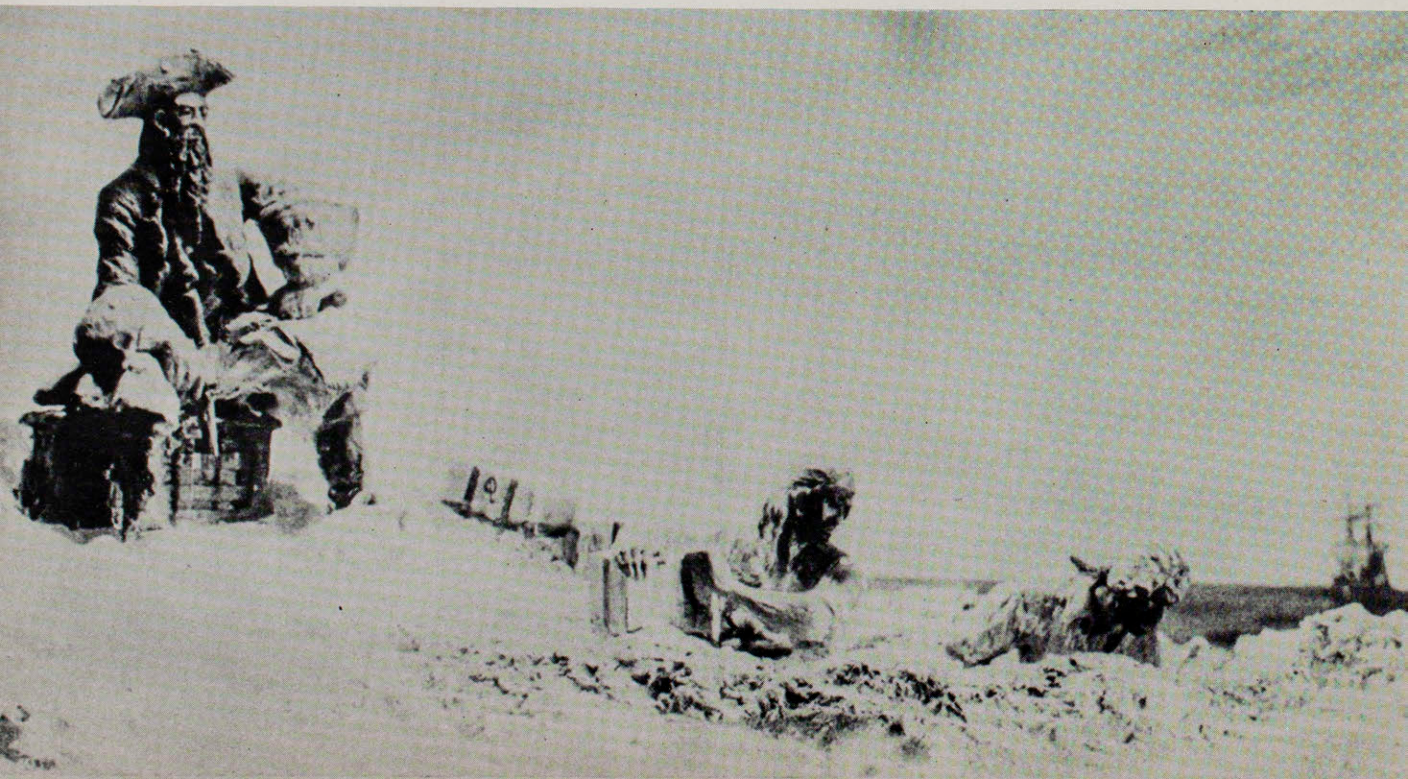


**STEEL WORKERS ON THE
EMPIRE STATE BUILDING (detail)**
(Museum of the City of New York, 1940)

Of necessity, I acquired a still-expanding research library and ever-increasing files. I made notes and sketches in museums here and abroad and collected original costumes, uniforms and weapons. This material was and is invaluable to me and its accumulation has become a lifelong hobby.

BLACKBEARD'S TREASURE

(Made for over mantle piece in private home, 1935)



In addition to my museum work, I made groups for libraries, country clubs, hotels, dude ranches and even private houses, where they might be placed on mantels or set in walls or bookcases. These groups offered the possibility of using somewhat different subjects and I made scenes of mermaids afloat in the Sargasso Sea, pirates on shipboard and burying treasure, figures of famous pirates and likenesses of other historical or literary characters. I made figures of Edgar Allan Poe Robert Louis Stevenson, Joseph Conrad and others, for clients who wanted portraits of their favorite authors.

When I came to Hollywood some twenty odd years ago to work as a character designer for motion pictures, I frequently made little portrait figures to help the director visualize the character and to study him in the round. Andrew Jackson, Mark Twain and Jean Lafitte are three of many I modelled for this purpose.

My work on small figures helped me in designing the appearance of characters in motion pictures and, from time to time, when I returned to making museum groups, much that I had learned in pictures was of great assistance.

While living in California, I have become more and more interested in western subjects and most of my present work is concerned with the west of earlier days. From the point of view of my early, ubiquitous years, this is a limitation of subject matter, but the field is not narrow, for it encompasses an overwhelming wealth of historic incident and is peopled by Indians, Conquistadors, mountain men, the Army in the West, prospectors, bad men, sheriffs, broncho busters . . . you name them.



THE YOUNG MARK TWAIN IN THE WEST
(In the artist's collection, 1935)



THE BRONCHO BUSTER
(Decoration for a Wyoming
Dude Ranch, 1927)



JOHN A. SUTTER



MOUNTAIN MEN



THE SPANISH CONQUISTADOR

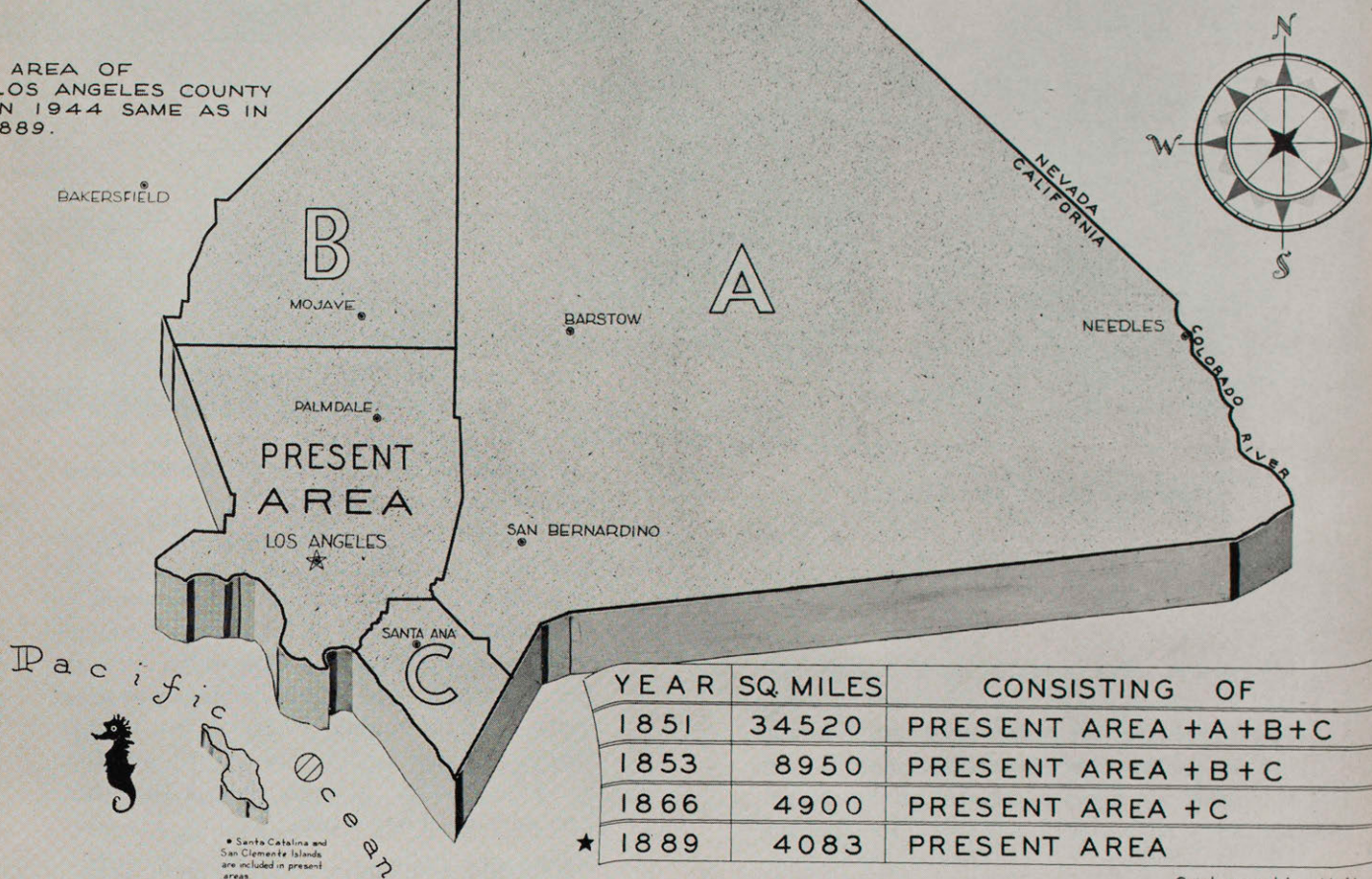


APACHE WARRIOR
(Los Angeles County Museum, 1955)

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

AREAS SINCE 1851

★ AREA OF
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
IN 1944 SAME AS IN
1889.



Los Angeles: The County That Became An Empire

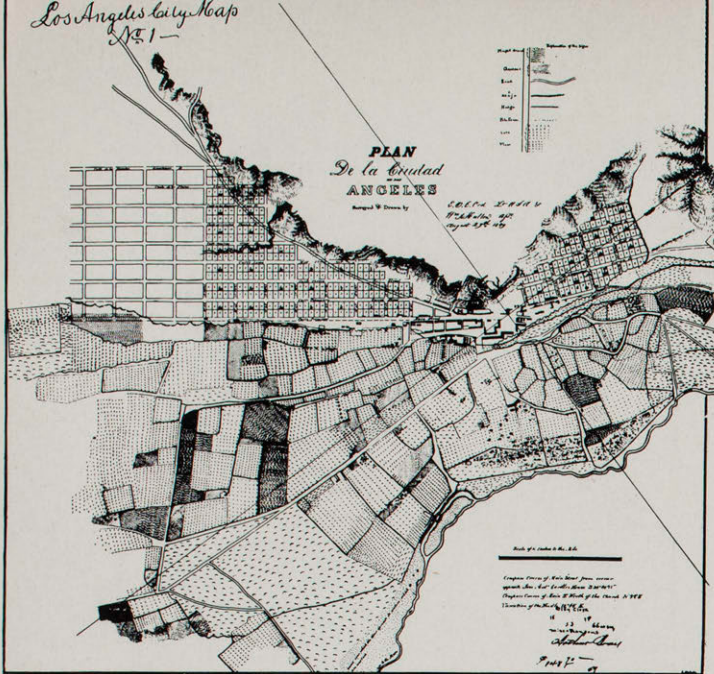
By JOHN BAUR *

Los Angeles County is an empire within an empire. Bigness has always been its chief characteristic and success almost a tradition. Today, with a population of five million, it is a vital industrial, commercial, cultural, and political center in Western America, as cosmopolitan in pop-

ulation, talents, and activities as any space its size in the Western Hemisphere. Yet, just 105 years ago when this county was formed, Los Angeles was sneeringly called "Queen of the Cow Counties," for in that poetic golden age of Mexican ranches the area, though colorful enough in

* Museum Instructor in History, Los Angeles County Museum.

Los Angeles City Map



ORD'S MAP OF LOS ANGELES, 1849

its idyllic existence, seemed a crude "Sleepy Hollow" to the less provincial visitors from far away. Almost overnight the greatest gold rush in history had turned northern California from a quiet wilderness into a gaudy, crowded pattern of mining camps, sophisticated port towns, and booming agricultural centers. Yet it hardly changed southern California at all! True, thousands of '49ers coming by the south-western route passed through Los Angeles, but few stopped for long, and these nearly unanimously remembered the region as manana-land, inhabited by a few Spaniards, Mexicans, and Indians and dotted with crumbling missions. In the area of this future county the only settlements were the missions of San Gabriel and San Fernando and the pueblo of Los Angeles. This town, though founded back in 1781, was still no inspiring sight. Before the visitor spread a collection of several adobe buildings along the mesa forming the western bank of the Los Angeles River. All but three structures were one-story high, and nearly all were flat-roofed, covered with mud and tar. There were no trees, except a dozen or so sycamores and the scrubby willows growing beside the sluggish little river. Yet, the stream, like the town which it gave life, was misleading in appearance. The arteries of irrigation were *zanjas*, or



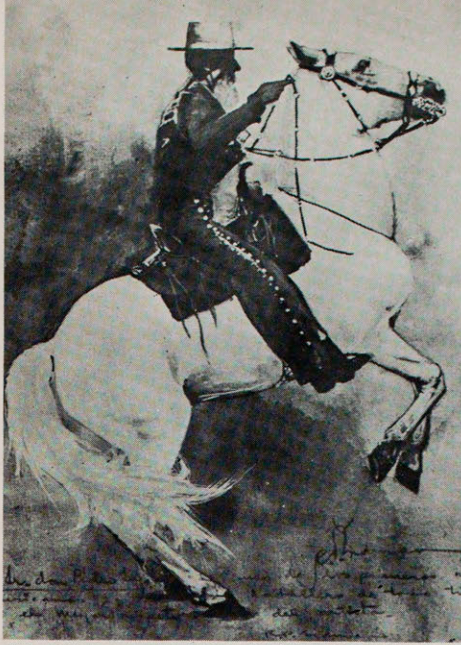
LOS ANGELES IN 1857

ditches, dug years before from the banks of this river, which "ran upside down." Los Angeles was a city of mud in winter, a town clothed in dust during summer. The community which would some day be a metropolitan area moving on innumerable wheels, then still depended on the ancient, creaking ox-drawn *carreta*. Angelenos who had to be good riders, were noted as the world's best horsemen. One stranger, who liked the climate but not those who had always enjoyed it, at least had to admit that "The only thing they appear to excel in is riding and certainly I have never seen such riders." In a county which one day would be internationally proud of its health records and excellent medical facilities, in 1850 were passed the first stringent laws to prevent bathing or washing in the canals. Meanwhile, the county that today is famous as a merchandising mecca had only four non-general stores: a watch shop, a druggist's, a tin store, and a wagon barn.

Yet, 1850 would be called the "Year of Years," because so many important things began at that date. Both Los Angeles City and Los Angeles County were formally organized this same year which saw California become a state. Interestingly

THE CARRETA
(Los Angeles County Museum Collection)





**DON PEDRO LUGO,
TYPICAL OF CALIFORNIA'S
HORSEMEN-RANCHERS**
*(Photo courtesy Title Insurance
and Trust Company)*



**AGUSTIN OLVERA,
FIRST COUNTY JUDGE**



**DON ANTONIO F. CORONEL
FIRST COUNTY ASSESSOR**

enough, both county and city are officially older than the state! This, our 31st state, entered the Union on September 9, but the county was formed by the legislature on February 18, while on April 4 the city was incorporated. This is how it happened: California, which had never experienced territorial government, decided to write its constitution and submit it to Congress for admission to statehood. When the constitutional convention was held in Monterey in September, 1849, 48 delegates represented 10 "districts," of which the Los Angeles region was one. These men set up a committee to form counties for their new state. They knew their history, geography, and popula-

tion statistics, but lacked good maps. California's population was still scant, especially in the south, since the gold mines were farther north. Thus the proposed southern counties should all be extremely big.

Deciding not to await formal admission to the Union in order to organize their state government, Californians quickly put the constitution into force and elected their first legislature, which met late in 1849. This body has been called by historians the "Legislature of a Thousand Drinks" because of its frequent adjournments to near-by bars, yet it enacted many good laws. In February, 1850 it created 27 counties.

**IGNACIO del VALLE,
FIRST COUNTY RECORDER**

**DON BENITO WILSON,
FIRST COUNTY CLERK,
GRANDFATHER OF
GENERAL
GEORGE S. PATTON**
*(Photo courtesy Title
Insurance and
Trust Company)*





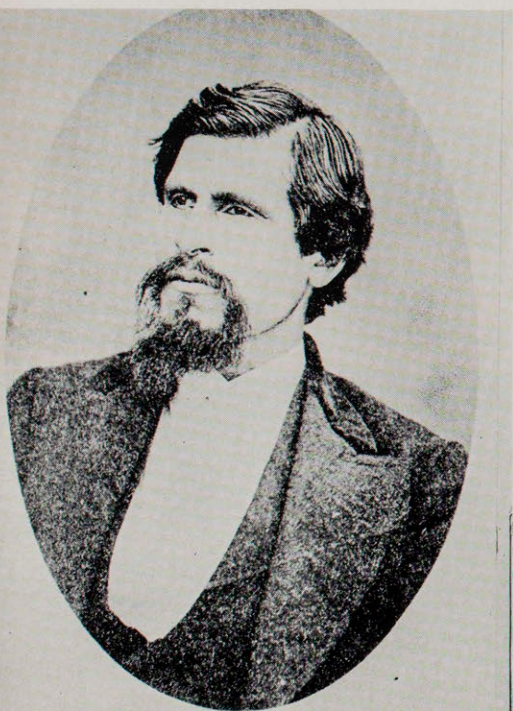
THE BELLA UNION HOTEL

When Los Angeles County came into being its limits were vague, though this was not due to any legislator's alcoholism. Much of the region was *terra incognita*; it included mountains, deserts, fertile but yet untilled plains, and stretches of Pacific coastline. Perhaps the bibulous statesmen acquired new faith in the county for which many were already predicting great things, because the very next year, 1851, they enlarged Los Angeles County, making it in dimensions indeed an em-

pire — one-fifth of all California, an area equal to New England minus Maine. It embraced more diversified scenery, climate, and soil than any other county in the nation. Now it reached from the Pacific to the Colorado River, at the expense of San Diego County, and from the latter county in the south to Mariposa in the north.

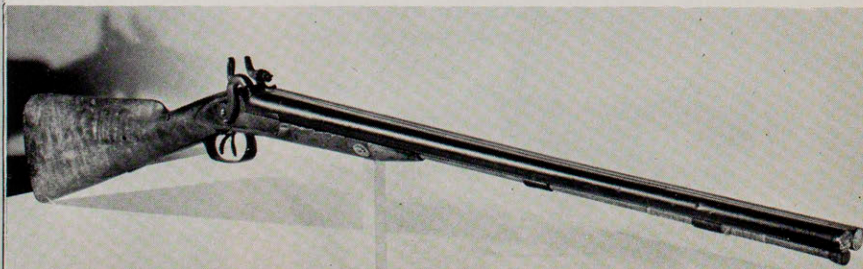
A knowledge of governmental offices and their functions at any given time and place leads to an understanding of the people and area governed. This has always been true of Los Angeles County. In 1850, the following offices were created: county judge, clerk, attorney, treasurer, assessor, recorder, sheriff, coroner, county surveyor, and two interpreters for the large Spanish-speaking population. On April 1, the first county elections were held. The county court and most other county bodies held forth in the historic old Bella Union Hotel. Two justices of the peace and the county judge served as the county's legislature until the Board of Supervisors was created in 1853.

In early Los Angeles, the sheriff was particularly busy at his hazardous duties of defending citizens against badmen and Indians. For example, during nearly every full moon in the early 'fifties



TIBURCIO VASQUEZ!

VASQUEZ'S GUN
(Los Angeles County
Museum Collection)

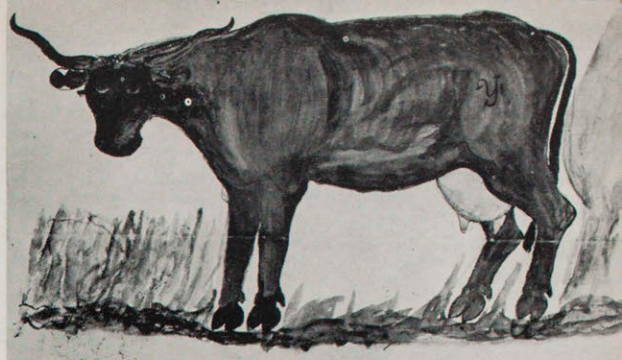


the warlike Utes and Mojave Indians from south-eastern California raided ranches and stole horses. Posses were organized to punish offenders. Then there were desperadoes. A military company of citizens was organized to help the sheriff keep order. Until well into the 'seventies the county was notorious for its badmen; visitors noticed the prevalence of bowie knives, pistols, rifles, and carbines. One wrote that 50 to 60 murders per year were common. As history shows, the county coroner earned his salary with overtime! In 1874, the region's most wanted criminal was the fabulous Tiburcio Vasquez, who trusted not even his own men. Hunted by Sheriff William P. Rowland's posse, he was wounded and captured and finally sentenced to be hanged. The County Museum contains relics of his reign of outlawry, among them a gun long preserved by the family of Francisco Ybarra.

Another very important county official, a hold-over from Mexican days, was the *juez del campo*, or judge of the plains. His seat of justice was the saddle and his word could not be questioned. It was this officer's duty to attend all round-ups of cattle and horses and serve as judge of ranching disputes. In the county archives each brand, plus a sample of hide with the brand burned into it, were preserved. The Museum also displays these materials. Today's residents are familiar with such ranch names that survive as La Ballona, Santa Anita, San Vicente, La Canada, La Puente, and Palos Verdes, but they cannot envision the county when 100,000 head of tough, longhorn cattle, wild as deer, grazed the plains among high yellow mustard resembling vast stunted forests. This was the region's chief livelihood before the great drought of 1862 turned rangeland into desert. After that, irrigation was the keynote as citrus, vine, and vegetables became typical elements of the landscape.

The county recorder was an important man, too, for in the 'fifties and 'sixties old Spanish and Mexican land grants were in almost constant dispute and confusions had to be solved and involved titles legalized.

JOHN TEMPLE CONVEYS LOS CERRITOS, 1866
(Photo courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company)



(Estado de California)
(Ciudad de los Angeles)



En virtud de la ley de 12 de abril, de 1850, se presenta y queda del Valle, solicitando, se le permita continuar, usando, el signo y señal que usa en sus rancho en la posesión de la finca, los cuales le fueron otorgados por la autoridad mexicana desde el año de 1835. Dicho es conocido con el nombre de los lavaderos. Y entre los fincos y señas registradas, no existe ninguna que coincida con la señal y arbolado de su finca de fincos y el árbol de pino y señal, con el nombre de la ley de 12 de abril de 1850.

En cuyo término inscribo mi nombre y pongo mi sello, en esta ciudad de los Angeles, hoy 2, de junio de 1866.
Jefe del Valle Registrado
por el Jefe del Valle
Juan Clemente Rijo.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY BRANDING CERTIFICATE, IN SPANISH, 1851

This Indenture, of the twenty third day of February, 1866, between John Temple, of San Francisco, on the one part, and Benjamin Plant, Thomas Plant, and Lewis Henry Breyer parties of the second part.

Witnesseth, that the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars, to them in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, have granted, sold, conveyed and confirmed unto the said parties of the second part, and to their heirs and assigns forever, All that tract of land situate in the County of Los Angeles, State of California, known by the name of Los Cerritos, and bounded on the South by the Rancho of Juan, and on the other sides by the Ranchos called San Pedro, Santa Gertrudis, San Cayetano and San Francisco, being the same land granted by José Ygnacio, Governor of California, to Francisco de la Torre, on the 23rd of May, A.D. 1834, for a more particular description of which reference is hereby made to the papers on file in the office of the Surveyor General for California, on a certain case numbered 10, on the docket of the Board of U.S. Land Commissioners to ascertain the title private land claims in the State of California, being also the same land conveyed to the party of the first part, by the said Board, on the 11th of April 1855, and by the U.S. District Court on February 23rd 1866, and also any right title or interest which the party of the first part may have acquired in the lands of the aforesaid adjoining Rancho called San Pedro.

Together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereto in anywise appertaining, and the services and services, remains and remainders, rents, issues and profits thereof. And also all the estate, right, title, interest, property, possession, claim and demand whatsoever, as well in law as in equity, of the said party of the first part, in or to the above described premises, and every part and parcel thereof with the appurtenances.

To Have and to Hold, all and singular the above mentioned and described premises, together with the appurtenances, unto the said parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns forever.

In Witness Whereof, the said party of the first part hath hereunto set his hand and seal, this day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the Presence of
A. R. Fairclough
J. Temple

Los Angeles Star.

LOS ANGELES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1852.

Almost as soon as the county was established the region began to change. When John R. Evertsen completed the first county census (Compiled January to March 1851, while he traveled mostly on horseback), he found that most of Los Angeles County's citizens were poorly educated. There were no schools in the vicinity, no library, no newspaper, and only three churches: the two missions and the old "Plaza Church" at the pueblo. The white population was 3,530, the Indians about equalled that number. At that time the county's total assessed wealth was fixed at only \$2,282,949. Thus there was plenty of room for the improvements about to take place! As a harbinger of progress, the *Los Angeles Star*, appeared. In the Museum one may see the silver star emblem that surmounted the newspaper office. By 1855, the first schools had been opened, and soon thereafter a hospital, run by the Sisters of Charity. Soon, too, the vast dimensions of this county of 34,000 square miles would shrink.

The first change came in 1853. Two years earlier a colony of Mormons had been sent from Salt Lake City by Brigham Young to settle the wilderness between that city and the ocean. They chose the empty land where San Bernardino now

stands and almost immediately petitioned the state legislature for a county government of their own. Therefore on April 26, 1853 San Bernardino County was created, cutting off 24,000 square miles from Los Angeles. It was the nation's largest county. Los Angeles kept her new boundaries for 13 years, although from 1855 to 1860 there was a vain attempt to create "Buena Vista County" from its territory. Then, in 1866, Kern County was formed from the northern portion of Los Angeles and part of Tulare County, but as this was mostly mountainous and seemingly worthless land, Angelenos did not object to losing another 5,000 square miles.

The next movement to subdivide the county became a 20-year struggle. With the growth after 1857 of Anaheim as the business center for the San Gabriel-Santa Ana River area, the German colonists there began to call for a new county. After 1869 their crusader was Max von Stroble, who told the state legislature that it took his neighbors two days and cost them \$6.00 to reach the Los Angeles courthouse. His proposed "Anaheim County" was always a dream, but in the 1880's when Santa Ana grew into an important town, Anaheim opposed the scheme! In 1889,

EARLY SCHOOL CLASS IN LOS ANGELES

(Photo courtesy Los Angeles City Schools)



THE GRAND CHANCE OF YOUR LIFE

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THE METROPOLIS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

Los Angeles to have the First Electric Railway west of the Rocky Mountains.

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One House

GIVEN

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Every Lot Purchaser has a Chance to Secure One of these Houses. 137 \$10 Worth of Tickets on the Electric Railway Given With Each Lot Sold.

Price of Lots \$290. Only \$20 required down, balance in Monthly Payments of \$10 without interest. These Houses are located in the Most Healthy and Desirable portion of the City.

CHARMING VIEW! PURE WATER! NO MALARIA! GOOD SOIL!

Every portion of the tract is available for homes. Each Lot, without the improvements, is worth the money asked. In six months this property will double in value. Many who live now will secure lots which, with the improvements, will be worth on the completion of the road, from one to five thousand dollars apiece. Property in other and less favored portions of the city sold at higher prices than are now being asked in this Tract, and investors then in some cases have realized more than quadruple the original sum expended.

The road is now being built, and the Association offers to make, if desired, the conditions of the agreement between lot purchasers such that if their proposed improvements are not carried out the money paid in will be refunded. The terms of payment are so easy that all can safely invest; and the owners of lots can feel assured that in any case they will have the worth of their money, while there is a fair chance to secure a small fortune for a trifling investment.

The deeds for the property are held for the Association, by F. C. Hewes, Cashier of the Los Angeles National Bank, as Trustee. Lots will be distributed by mutual agreement, as in the Childs and Urquhart Tracts. Books are now open for subscribers at the office of the Electric Railway Homestead Association, Room 8, Schumacher Block. Parties who desire to make an investment in Los Angeles real estate will find that this opportunity will fully bear investigation. One fact should be borne in mind, and that is that this Association fully guarantees that all the improvements proposed will be carried out. They will do the work themselves, and will not have to depend upon outsiders as has been the case with other distribution associations. Shares are rapidly being taken. Secure one before it is too late.

The Electric Railway Homestead Association,

Room 8, Schumacher Block, opposite the Post-office, Los Angeles, Cal.

W. S. CARSKADDON, Manager.

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TYPICAL PUBLICITY OF THE BOOM OF THE EIGHTIES

for success. Meanwhile, many new towns had been founded, such as Alhambra, Avalon, Azusa, Burbank, Claremont, Covina, Glendale, Glendora, Hollywood, Inglewood, Long Beach, Monrovia, Redondo Beach, and Whittier. Literature and education were stimulated. Colleges, beginning as small, private, denominational schools, soon gained national, and in some cases, worldwide, fame. These included the University of Southern California, Occidental College, Pomona College, Throop Polytechnic (now called California Institute of Technology), and Whittier. The 'eighties saw public school enrollment grow from about a score of schools and approximately 500 students to 11,000 pupils in 200 buildings. In the meantime, population figures showed that during the 'sixties the county had grown about 30%, during the 'seventies it had doubled, and in the booming 'eighties, despite the crash and the loss of 30,000 people to newborn Orange County, it had trebled! In the 'nineties Los Angeles won its "harbor

fight," and eventually a world port became a reality. A decade later the Los Angeles Aqueduct from Owens Valley gave the basis for a greater population growth. Since then, county population has increased each decade by at least 50%, except during the depression when the 'thirties saw it cut to 22% for city areas but 62% for unincorporated sections. In 1950, the county officially contained 4,151,687 people; today, it probably has passed the five-million mark.

It has been a herculean task for county governmental services to keep pace with unprecedented population growth. Yet, in 1946 a political scientist at Stanford University, Edwin A. Cottrell, was able to conclude that this county performs more individual functions for its citizens than any other in the nation — this despite the conglomeration of political units: 45 municipalities, 30 "islands," and 14 populous unincorporated areas. Population has increased at a greater rate in these unincorporated areas where County government alone serves the people than in incorporated cities. Among other things, the county provides welfare and hospital services, county highways, superior courts and justice courts, the recording of property titles, marriages, births, and deaths, assessing property for taxation, aiding agriculture, and the maintaining of county parks, museums, and yacht harbors. Always progressive, Los Angeles County is one of the ten since 1911 to establish a county charter; it was promulgated in 1912-1913. Today, over 30,000 people work for the county, or about the same number as the whole population in 1880!

In 1917 when the City of Los Angeles first began to face complicated metropolitan problems, some reformers hoped the city and county would be consolidated into one government. The county would let communities beyond the city limits join other counties or form their own. San Francisco had earlier done this. Opponents pointed to the dangers involved. San Francisco's expansion had been limited. In the Los Angeles area, city and county were interdependent; they needed one another economically, socially, and politically in state affairs. They foresaw such a growth as "even the optimist may underestimate." The county stayed intact; the dangers foreseen were avoided, while the predictions of success were fulfilled. The Cow County, with more modest boundaries, has in a century become a unique empire in democratic America.



RECENT AERIAL VIEW OF THE UCLA CAMPUS
(Photo courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company)

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S
 ORIGINAL STRUCTURE**
*(Photo courtesy
 Farmers and Merchants National Bank)*



THE MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

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